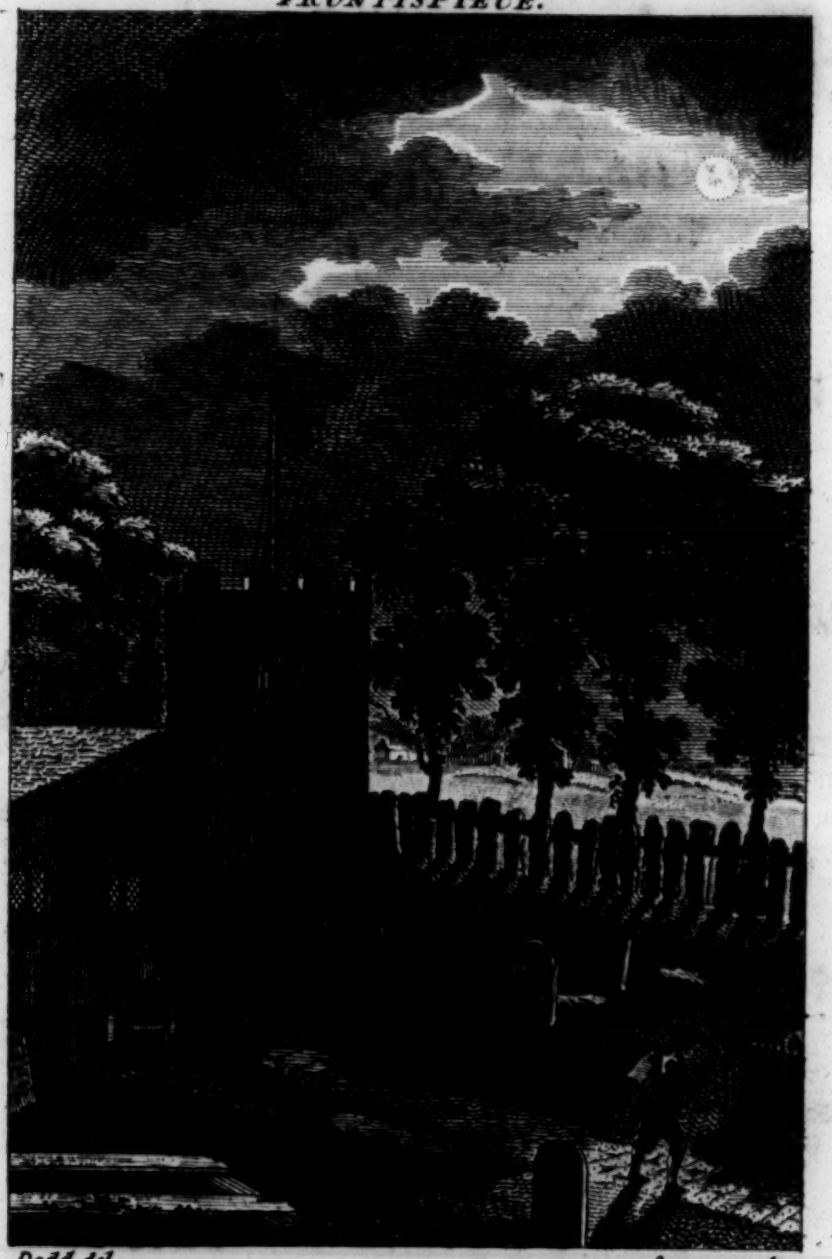
FRONTISPIECE.



Dodd del. Sparrow sculp.

Oft in the lone churchyard at night, I've seen
By glimpse of moonshine chequering thro' the trees,
The school boy with his satchel in his hand,
Whistling aloud to bear his courage up.— See line 56.

Published Febr 4 1786, by T. Fielding, Paternoster Row.

84962

THE GRAVE;

By ROBERT BLAIR:

To which is added

GRAY'S ELEGY

In a Country Church Yard.

WITH

NOTES

Moral, Critical, and Explanatory.

LONDON:

Printed for JOHN FIELDING, No. 23, Pater-noster Row.

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PREFACE.

AS every ſon and daughter of Adam muſt ſooner or later *die*, and their bodies be conſigned to the gloomy manſions of the *grave*, it is highly neceſſary, and may be truly profitable, for every one, whether young or old, rich or poor, ſeriouſly to reflect on the brevity of life, the certainty of death, and that eternal world, on the brink of which they are hourly ſtanding.

In the following well-known Poem, (written by a clergyman in Edinburgh, and firſt publiſhed in the year 1747) many important admonitions are held out, and ſolemn truths inculcated, worthy the regard and remembrance of all[1]; moſt of the characters which mankind ſuſtain in the *preſent* ſtate, many of the purſuits of men in general while here below, together with the vanity and emptineſs of every earthly pleaſure and enjoyment, are depicted in the moſt lively and ſtriking colours[2].

Let the *young* and *gay* learn hence to be ſerious, and redeem their time, knowing that *the days are evil*[3]; let the *rich* and *great* learn hence, the folly of ambition and truſting in abundance, knowing that *riches take them-*

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[1] Mr. Hervey, in his Meditations among the Tombs, page 59, quotes this poem, and ſays, as his opinion and recommendation of it, "ſee a *valuable* poem, entitled the *Grave*"------Heron, alſo, in his 35th Letter on Literature, juſt publiſhed, particularly notices this poem, and takes no ſmall pains to recommend the peruſal of it, as a cloſe imitation of Shakeſpeare's ſtile and manner. See *Letters* on *Literature*, page 276.

[2] It is divided into *two* parts, to prevent its appearing too long and tedious.

[3] Epheſians, xv. 16.

ſelves wings and flee away[4]: Let perſons of all ages and ſtations in life, learn hence the neceſſity of being always ready for their laſt great change, knowing *there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge in the* GRAVE, *whither are we going*[5].

The Grave has eloquence; its lectures teach
In *ſilence*, louder than divines can *preach!*
Hear what it ſays—ye ſons of *folly* hear,
It ſpeaks to *you*, lend an *attentive* ear.——*Moore.*

Reſpecting GRAY'S ELEGY, it muſt be acknowledged, though far from being altogether faultleſs, it is confeſſedly intereſting, natural, and pathetic, and ſtrongly addreſſes the tender feelings of every humane and diſcerning reader.

Dr. Johnſon, in his Lives of the Poets, ſpeaking of the works of Mr. *Gray*, makes the following remarks upon *this* poem:

" In the character of his Elegy, I rejoice to concur " with the common reader; for by the common ſenſe of " readers uncorrupted with literary prejudices, after all " the refinements of ſubtilty, and the dogmatiſm of " learning, muſt be finally decided all claim to poetical " honours.

" The Church-yard abounds with images which find " a mirror in every mind, and with ſentiments to which " every boſom returns an echo. The four ſtanzas be-

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4 Proverbs, xxiii. 5.

5 Eccles. ix. 10.

" ginning, *Yet even theſe bones*, are to me original; I " have never ſeen the notions in any other place: yet he " that reads them here, perſuades himſelf that he has " always felt them. Had Gray written often thus, it " had been vain to blame, and uſeleſs to praiſe him."

This Elegy has, doubtleſs, been much read, and highly eſteemed[6], for the ſmoothneſs of its numbers, and the melancholy pleaſure it generally affords to an attentive and ſympathizing mind: but though ſaid to be written in a *church-yard*, where even the moſt gay, thoughtleſs, and inconſiderate, are naturally led to be grave and ſerious, it is to be regretted ſo little appears throughout it, to inculcate and enforce thoſe ſolemn, important, and intereſting reflections, a walk among the *tombs* is peculiarly calculated to ſuggeſt, reſpecting *death* and a *future* ſtate[7].

Should the occaſional notes now firſt added to theſe much admired poems, prove entertaining and inſtructive, and make them more uſeful, edifying, and acceptable, eſpecially to *younger* minds, the Editor's wiſhes will be fully gratified.

Nov. 3, 1785. G. WRIGHT.

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6 Dr. Johnſon ſtiles it, the *far-fam'd* Elegy in a Church-yard.

7 The man how bleſt! who, ſick of *gaudy* ſcenes,
(Scenes apt to thruſt between us and ourſelves)
Is led by *choice* to take his fav'rite walk
Beneath Death's gloomy, ſilent, cypreſs ſhades,
Unpierc'd by vanity's fantaſtic ray;
To read his monuments, to weigh his duſt,
Viſit the vaults, and dwell among the tombs.

Night Thoughts.

The following extract from an elegiac poem on the death of Mr. Gray, written by a ſympathizing friend, being an imitation of, and alluding to the enſuing Elegy, may not improperly accompany it.

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

'Tis done, 'tis done—the iron hand of pain,
With ruthleſs fury and corroſive force,
Racks every joint, and ſeizes every vein;
He ſinks, he groans, he falls a lifeleſs corſe [8].

Thus fades the flow'r, nipp'd by the frozen gale,
Tho' once ſo ſweet, ſo lovely to the eye;
Thus the tall oaks, when boiſt'rous ſtorms aſſail,
Torn from the earth, a mighty ruin lie.

Ye ſacred ſiſters of the plaintive verſe,
Now let the ſtream of fond affection flow;
O pay your tribute o'er the ſlow-drawn hearſe,
With all the manly dignity of woe.

Oft when the curfew tolls its parting knell [9],
With ſolemn pauſe yon church-yard's gloom ſurvey,
While ſorrow's ſighs, and tears of pity tell,
How juſt the moral of the poet's lay.

O'er his lone grave, in Contemplation's guiſe,
Oft let the pilgrim drop a ſilent tear;
Oft let the ſhepherd's tender accents riſe,
Big with the ſweets of each revolving year.

---

[8] Mr. Gray died at Cambridge in a convulſion fit, July 31, 1771, ætat. 55.

[9] See the beginning of this Elegy.

THE

THE

GRAVE,

PART THE FIRST.

It is appointed unto men once to die,
And after death the judgment.

THE ARGUMENT.

The Author's choice of his ſubject; Invocation, *addreſt to the Almighty; the Grave deſcribed; an ancient country church pourtrayed;* Ghoſts *make their appearance; a* ſchool-boy *paſſing through a church-yard by moon light, finely depicted; the tombs viſited by a* widow; *apoſtrophe addreſt to the Grave; the ſweets of* friendſhip; *mortifying queſtions to human pride; embalming the dead, and pompous funerals, cruel* irony; *an addreſs to undertakers, commonly called* death hunters; *time deſtroys all the works of men; the grave buries all diſtinctions; the frailty of beauteous charms; ſtrength overcome by ſickneſs; philoſophers, orators, and phyſicians, alike ſubdued by all-conquering Death; the miſer, a truly deſpicable character; covetouſneſs, its dreadful effects; the vanity of riches; the departure of a thoughtleſs ſoul awfully repreſented; the ſolemnity of death, with ſuitable and intereſting reflections.*

THE GRAVE.

O ye timorous ſouls! that are terrified at the ſound of the paſſing bell; that turn pale at the ſight of an opened *grave;* and ſcarce behold a *coffin* or a *ſcull* without a ſhuddering horror; cry mightily to the Father of your ſpirits for *faith* in his dear Son [10].—*Hervey's Meditations.*

WHILE ſome affect the ſun, and ſome the ſhade,
Some flee the city, ſome the hermitage [11];
Their aims as various, as the roads they take
In journeying thro' life;—the taſk be mine,
To paint the gloomy horrors of the TOMB;
Th' appointed place of rendezvous, where all
Theſe travellers meet [12].——Thy ſuccours I implore,
Eternal King! whoſe potent arm ſuſtains
The keys of hell and death [13].—The GRAVE, dread thing!
Men ſhiver when thou'rt named: Nature appall'd,

[10] 'Tis faith diſarms deſtruction—
Believe, and ſhew the reaſon of a man;
Believe, and taſte the pleaſure of a god;
Believe, and look with triumph in the tomb.
Night Thoughts.

[11] The poet here evidently refers to the various ſubjects (particularly *public* and *private* life, *ſolitude* and *ſociety*, the *town* and *country*) which *have* been, or ſtill *are* celebrated by poetic writers.

[12] Job, xxx. 23.

[13] Rev. i. 18

Shakes

Shakes off her wonted firmneſs.——Ah! how dark
Thy long-extended realms, and rueful waſtes!
Where nought but Silence reigns, and Night, dark Night,
Dark as was CHAOS, ere the infant ſun
Was roll'd together, or had try'd his beams
Athwart the gloom profound.——The ſickly taper,
By glimm'ring thro' thy low-brow'd miſty vaults,
(Furr'd round with mouldy damps, and ropy ſlime,)
Lets fall a ſupernumerary horror,
And only ſerves to make thy night more irkſome.
Well do I know thee by thy truſty YEW,
Cheerleſs, unſocial plant [14]! that loves to dwell
'Midſt ſculls and coffins, epitaphs and worms:
Where light-heel'd ghoſts, and viſionary ſhades,
Beneath the wan, cold moon (as fame reports)
Embody'd, thick, perform their myſtic rounds [15].
No other merriment, dull tree! is thine.

SEE yonder hallow'd Fane;—the pious work
Of names once fam'd, now dubious or forgot,
And bury'd midſt the wreck of things which were;
There lie interr'd the more illuſtrious dead [16].

---

[14] Many country church-yards have yew trees planted in them. Various reaſons are aſſigned for this cuſtom; one of the moſt probable is, this tree being an *evergreen*, may in ſome reſpect be eſteemed no unfit emblem of the immortality of the ſoul, as it never dies.

[15] How populous! how vital is the grave!—
This is creation's melancholy vault;
The vale funereal, the ſad cypreſs gloom;
The land of apparitions, empty ſhades!—*Night Thoughts.*

Now melancholy ſpectres viſit the ruins of ancient monaſteries, and frequent the ſolitary manſions of the dead.—*Hervey on the Night.*

[16] I pore upon the inſcriptions, and am juſt able to pick out, that theſe are the remains of the rich and the renown'd; no *vulgar* dead are depoſited here. *Hervey on the Tombs.*

The

The wind is up:—hark! how it howls!—Methinks,
'Till now, I never heard a ſound ſo dreary:
Doors creak, and windows clap, and night's foul bird [17],
Rook'd in the ſpire, ſcreams loud; the gloomy aiſles
Black plaſter'd, and hung round with ſhreds of 'ſcutcheons,
And tatter'd coats of arms, ſend back the ſound,
Laden with heavier airs, from the low vaults,
The manſions of the dead.—Rous'd from their ſlumbers,
In grim array the griſly ſpectres riſe,
Grin horrible, and, obſtinately ſullen,
Paſs and repaſs, huſh'd as the foot of Night [18].
Again the ſcreech-owl ſhrieks—ungracious ſound!
I'll hear no more; it make one's blood run chill.

QUITE round the pile, a row of reverend elms,
(Coæval near with that) all ragged ſhew,
Long laſh'd by the rude winds [19]. Some rift half down
Their branchleſs trunks; others ſo thin at top,
That ſcarce two crows can lodge in the ſame tree.
Strange things, the neighbours ſay, have happen'd here;
Wild ſhrieks have iſſued from the hollow tombs [20];
Dead men have come again, and walk'd about;
And the great bell has toll'd unrung, untouch'd.

---

17 The ſcreech-owl chiefly frequents old ruined buildings, and is often heard among the walls of ancient country churches.

18 Now dreary forms, in ſullen ſtate, ſtalk along the gloom; or, ſwifter than lightning, glide along the ſhade; they paſs and repaſs in unſubſtantial images, along the forſaken galleries, or take their determined ſtand over ſome lamented grave.—*Hervey on the Night.*

19 See an elegant deſcription of a country church in the Beauties of Hervey, juſt publiſhed.

20 Now voices more than mortal are heard from the echoing vaults, and groans iſſue from the hollow tombs.—*Ibid.*

(Such tales their cheer at wake or goſſipping,
When it draws near to witching time of night.)

OFT in the lone Church yard at night I've ſeen,
By glimpſe of moonſhine chequering thro' the trees,
The ſchool boy, with his ſatchel in his hand,
Whiſtling aloud to bear his courage up,
And lightly tripping o'er the long flat ſtones,
(With nettles ſkirted, and with moſs o'ergrown,)
That tell in homely phraſe who lie below[21].
Sudden he ſtarts, and hears, or *thinks* he hears,
The ſound of ſomething purring at his heels[22];
Full faſt he flies, and dares not look behind him,
'Till, out of breath, he overtakes his fellows,
Who gather round and wonder at the tale
Of horrid APPARITION tall and ghaſtly,
That walks at dead of night, or takes his ſtand
O'er ſome new-open'd grave; and (ſtrange to tell!)
Evaniſhes at crowing of the cock[23].

THE new-made WIDOW, too, I've ſometimes 'ſpy'd,
Sad ſight! ſlow moving o'er the proſtrate dead:
Liſtleſs, ſhe crawls along in doleful black,
While burſts of ſorrow guſh from either eye,
Faſt falling down her now untaſted cheek.
Prone on the lowly grave of the dear man
She drops; whilſt buſy meddling Memory,

---

21 Yet e'en theſe bones from inſult to protect,
Some frail memorial ſtill erected nigh,
With uncouth rhymes and ſhapeleſs ſculpture deckt,
Implores the paſſing tribute of a ſigh.—*Gray's Elegy.*

22 See the frontiſpiece.

23 The above deſcription has met with univerſal approbation, and is doubtleſs one of the moſt natural and pleaſing pictures throughout the whole poem.

In

In barbarous ſucceſſion, muſters up
The paſt endearments of their ſofter hours[24],
Tenacious of its theme. Still, ſtill ſhe thinks
She ſees him, and indulging the fond thought,
Clings yet more cloſely to the ſenſeleſs turf,
Nor heeds the paſſenger who looks that way[25].

INVIDIOUS GRAVE!—how doſt thou rend in ſunder
Whom love has knit, and ſympathy made one?
A tie more ſtubborn far than Nature's band.
FRIENDSHIP! myſterious cement of the ſoul[26];
Sweetner of life, and ſolder[27] of ſociety,
I owe thee much. Thou haſt deſerved from me,
Far, far beyond what I can ever pay.
Oft have I prov'd the labours of thy love,
And the warm efforts of the gentle heart,
Anxious to pleaſe.—Oh! when my friend and I
In ſome thick wood have wander'd heedleſs on,
Hid from the vulgar eye, and ſat us down

---

24 The following ſentiments in a late publication entitled, *The Guide to Domeſtic Happineſs*, may ſerve as an illuſtration of the poet's deſcription of a widow's grief: "When a huſband is carried to the grave, we at "once find excuſes for every weakneſs, and palliations of every fault; "we recollect a thouſand endearments, which before glided off our "minds without impreſſion; a thouſand favours unrepaid; a thouſand "duties unperform'd; and wiſh, vainly wiſh, for his return, not ſo "much that we may *receive* as *beſtow* happineſs."

25 Dr. Young happily expreſſes the poignant grief of ſurviving relatives on the death of thoſe they dearly loved, by ſaying,

When ſuch friends part, 'tis the *ſurvivor* dies.

Night Thoughts.

26 A gen'rous friendſhip no cold medium knows,
Burns with one love, with one reſentment glows;
One ſhould our int'reſts and our paſſions be;
My friend muſt hate the man that injures me.

Pope's Homer.

27 Uniter, or ſtrengthener. See *Johnſon's Dictionary*.

Upon the ſloping cowſlip-cover'd bank,
Where the pure limpid ſtream has ſlid along
In grateful errors thro' the underwood,
Sweet murmuring; methought the ſhrill-tongu'd thruſh
Mended his ſong of love; the ſooty blackbird
Mellow'd his pipe, and ſoften'd every note:
The eglantine ſmell'd ſweeter, and the roſe
Aſſum'd a dye more deep; whilſt ev'ry flower
Vy'd with its fellow-plant in luxury
Of dreſs——Oh! then the longeſt ſummer's day
Seem'd too too much in haſte; ſtill the full heart
Had not imparted half: 'twas happineſs
Too exquiſite to laſt[28]. Of joys departed,
Not to return, how painful the remembrance!

DULL GRAVE!—thou ſpoil'ſt the dance of youthful blood,
Strik'ſt out the dimple from the cheek of Mirth,
And ev'ry ſmirking feature from the face;
Branding out LAUGHTER with the name of MADNESS.
Where are the JESTERS now? the men of health,
Complectionally pleaſant? Where's the DROLL,
Whoſe ev'ry look and geſture was a joke
To clapping theatres and ſhouting crouds,
And made ev'n thick-lip'd muſing Melancholy
To gather up her face into a ſmile

[28] Dr. Young, ſpeaking of the happineſs of true friendſhip, thus expreſſes himſelf.

Celeſtial *happineſs* when'er ſhe ſtoops
To viſit *earth*, *one* ſhrine the goddeſs finds,
And one *alone*, to make her ſweet amends
For abſent *heaven*---the *boſom* of a *friend*;
Where heart *meets* heart, *reciprocally* ſoft,
Each other's pillow to repoſe *divine*.-- *Night Thoughts.*

Before

Before ſhe was aware? Ah! ſullen now,
And dumb as the green turf that covers them [29].

WHERE are the mighty thunderdolts of war?
The ROMAN CÆSARS, and the GRECIAN CHIEFS,
The boaſt of ſtory? Where the hot-brain'd youth,
Who the TIARA at his pleaſure tore
From Kings of all the then diſcover'd globe,
And cry'd, forſooth, becauſe his arm was hamper'd,
And had not room enough to do its work?
Alas! how ſlim, diſhonourably ſlim,
And cram'd into a ſpace we bluſh to name!
Proud ROYALTY! how alter'd in thy looks!
How blank thy features, and how wan thy hue [30]!
SON OF THE MORNING whither art thou gone?
Where haſt thou hid thy many-ſpangled head,
And the majeſtic menance of thine eyes
Felt from afar? Pliant and powerleſs now,
Like new-born infant wound up in his ſwathes,
Or victim tumbled flat upon its back,
That throbs beneath the ſacrificer's knife [31].
Mute, muſt thou bear the ſtrife of little tongues,
And coward inſults of the baſe-born crowd,
That grudge a priviledge thou never hadſt,
But only hop'd for in the peaceful GRAVE,

---

29 Say, ye gay candidates for *comic* ſcenes,
Where are your mimic *Foots* and *Shuters* now,
Who lately kept your features in a grin?

30 I thank you, ye relics of ſounding titles and magnificent names; ye have taught me more of the littleneſs of the world than all the volumes of my library: your nobility arrayed in a winding ſheet, your grandeur mouldering in an urn, are the moſt indiſputable proofs of the *nothingneſs* of all *created* things.——*Hervey on the Tombs.*

31 The lamb.

Of being unmoleſted and alone[32].
ARABIA's gums and odoriferous drugs[33],
And honours by the HERALDS duly paid,
In mode and form ev'n to a very ſcruple;
Oh! cruel IRONY! theſe come too late,
And only mock whom they were meant to honour.
Surely there's not a dungeon ſlave that's bury'd
In the highway, unſhrouded and uncoffin'd,
But lies as ſoft and ſleeps as ſound as he[34].
Sorry pre-eminence of high deſcent,
Above the vulgar born to rot in ſtate[35].

BUT ſee! the well-plum'd HEARSE comes nodding on
Stately and ſlow[36]: and properly attended
By the whole ſable tribe, that painful watch
The ſick man's door, and live upon the dead,
By letting out their perſons by the hour,
To mimic ſorrow, where the heart's not ſad.
How rich the trappings! now they're all unfurl'd,
And glittering in the ſun; triumphant entries

---

32 *Here the wicked ceaſe from troubling, and the weary are at reſt.* Job, iii. 17.

33 The poet here alludes to the Ægyptian method of embalming the dead.

34 In this houſe appointed for all living, the ſervant was equally accommodated and lodged in the ſame ſtory with his maſter; the poor indigent lay as ſoftly, and ſlept as ſoundly, as the moſt opulent poſſeſſor.
Hervey's Meditations.

35 Dr. Young happily expreſſes the vanity and emptineſs of all human grandeur in the following beautiful lines, well adapted for a general inſcription on the tombs of the rich and great:

Earth's higheſt ſtation ends in, *Here he lies*;
And *duſt to duſt*, concludes her nobleſt ſong.
Night Thoughts.

36 Dr. Watts, in his Elegy on Mr. Gunſton, thus elegantly deſcribes the appearance of the plume-decked hearſe;

Solemn and ſlow it moves unto the tomb,
While weighty ſorrows nod on every plume.

Of

Of Conquerors, and Coronation pomps,
In glory ſcarce exceed. Great gluts of people
Retard th' unwieldy ſhow: whilſt from the caſements,
And houſes' tops, ranks behind ranks, cloſe wedg'd,
Hang bellying o'er. But tell us, why this waſte,
Why this ado in earthing up a carcaſe
That's fall'n into diſgrace, and in the noſtril
Smells horrible[37]?—Ye UNDERTAKERS, tell us,
'Midſt all the gorgeous figures you exhibit,
Why is the *principal* conceal'd, for which
You make this mighty ſtir?—'Tis wiſely done:
What would offend the eye in a good picture,
The painter caſts diſcreetly into ſhades.

PROUD LINEAGE, now how little thou appear'ſt
Below the envy of the private man!
HONOUR, that meddleſome, officious ill,
Purſues thee e'en to death; nor there ſtops ſhort;
Strange perſecution! when the GRAVE itſelf
Is no protection from rude ſufferance.

ABSURD to think to over-reach the GRAVE,
And from the wreck of names to reſcue ours.
The beſt concerted ſcheme men lay for fame
Die faſt away; only *themſelves* die faſter.
The far-fam'd SCULPTOR, and the laurell'd BARD,
Thoſe bold inſurancers of deathleſs fame,
Supply their little feeble aids in vain[38].

37 *Pompous* funerals are as *ridiculous* as they are *unneceſſary*; ridiculous in reſpect to the *living*, except in the views of thoſe who reap *pecuniary* advantage from them, and unneceſſary reſpecting the *dead*, who are the principal ſubject and occaſions of them.

38 Praiſes on tombs are titles vainly ſpent;
A man's *good name* is his *beſt* monument.

The tapering PYRAMID th' ÆGYPTIAN's pride,
And wonder of the world, whoſe ſpiky top
Has wounded the thick cloud, and long outliv'd
The angry ſhaking of the winter's ſtorm;
Yet ſpent at laſt by th' injuries of heaven,
Shatter'd with age, and furrow'd o'er with years,
The myſtic cone with hieroglyphics cruſted,
At once gives way [39]. Oh! lamentable ſight!
The labour of whole ages tumbles down,
A hideous and miſhapen length of ruins [40].
Sepuchral columns wreſtle but in vain
With all-ſubduing Time; her cank'ring hand
With calm, delib'rate malice waſteth them [41]:
Worn on the edge of days, the braſs conſumes,
The buſto moulders, and the deep-cut marble,
Unſteady to the ſteel, gives up its charge.
AMBITION, half convicted of her folly,
Hangs down her head, and reddens at the tale [42].

---

39 Amidſt the general wreck of all the works of men, this thought ſhould ſtrike us:

Virtue alone outbuilds the *pyramids;*
Her monuments ſhall laſt, when *Egypt*'s fall.—*Night Thoughts.*

40 Sic tranſit gloria mundi.

41 Well might Shakeſpeare ſay, and have it engraven on his monument, as a proof of the inſtability of all human things.

The cloud-capt towers,
The gorgeous palaces,
The ſolemn temples,
The great globe itſelf,
Yea, all that it inherits,
Shall diſſolve,
And, like the baſeleſs fabric of a viſion,
Leave not a wreck behind.

42 * * * * * * * Death is Victory;
It binds in chains the raging ills of life;
Luſt and ambition, wrath and avarice,
Dragg'd at his chariot wheels, applaud his power.
Night Thoughts.

HERE

HERE all the mighty TROUBLERS OF THE EARTH,
Who ſwam to ſov'reign rule thro' ſeas of blood;
Th' oppreſſive, ſturdy, man-deſtroying Villains,
Who ravag'd kingdoms, and laid empires waſte,
And, in a cruel wantonneſs of power,
Thinn'd ſtates of half their people, and gave up
To want the reſt; now, like a ſtorm that's ſpent,
Lie huſh'd[43], and meanly ſneak behind the covert[44].
Vain thought! to hide them from the general ſcorn
That haunts and doggs them like an injured ghoſt
Implacable.—Here, too, the PETTY TYRANT,
Whoſe ſcant domains GEOGRAPHER ne'er notic'd,
And, well for neighbouring grounds, of arm as ſhort,
Who fix'd his iron talons on the poor,
And grip'd them like ſome lordly beaſt of prey;
Deaf to the forceful cries of gnawing Hunger,
And piteous plaintive voice of Miſery;
(As if a SLAVE was not a ſhred of nature,
Of the ſame common nature with his LORD;)
Now tame and humble, like a child that's whip'd,
Shakes hands with duſt, and calls the worm his kinſman[45];
Nor pleads his rank and birthright. Under ground,
PRECEDENCY's a jeſt; Vaſſal and Lord,
Groſsly familiar, ſide by ſide conſume[46].

WHEN

---

43 Mors ſola fatetur
Quantula ſunt hominum corpuſcula,—*Juv.*

44 Where are the *Alexanders* and *Cæſars*, ſo fam'd for conqueſt *once*? Where are they *now*?———
Nature provides for *all* one common grave,
The laſt retreat of the diſtreſt and brave.

45 The Grave unites, there e'en the Great find reſt,
And blended lie th' oppreſſor and th' oppreſt.—*Pope.*

46 The following lines, as an antidote againſt *pride*, are very expreſſive, and worthy to be remembered and attended to by all:

WHEN ſelf-eſteem, or other's adulation,
Would cunningly perſuade us we are ſomething
Above the common level of our kind;
The *Grave* gainſays the ſmooth-complection'd flattery,
And with blunt truth acquaints us what we are[47].

BEAUTY—thou pretty plaything, dear deceit!
That ſteals ſo ſoftly o'er the ſtripling's heart,
And gives it a new pulſe unknown before,
The GRAVE diſcredits thee[48]: thy charms expung'd,
Thy roſes faded, and thy lilies foil'd,
What haſt thou more to boaſt of[49]? Will thy lovers
Flock round thee now, to gaze and do thee homage[50]?
Methinks I ſee thee with thy head now laid,
Whilſt ſurfeited upon thy damaſk cheek
The high-fed WORM, in lazy volumes roll'd,
Riots unſcar'd.—For *this* was all thy caution?

I dreamt, that buried with my fellow clay,
Cloſe by a common *Beggar*'s ſide I lay;
And as ſo *mean* an object ſhock'd my *pride*,
Thus like a corpſe of *conſequence*, I cry'd;
Scoundrel! begone, and henceforth touch me not,
More manners learn, and at a *diſtance* rot.
Scoundrel! then, with an haughtier tone cried he,
Proud *lump of earth!* I ſcorn thy *words* and *thee*;
Here all are *equal*, now thy caſe is *mine*,
This is *my* rotting-place, and *that* is *thine*.

47 Well might Job exclaim, upon reflecting on the ſhortneſs and uncertainty of human life, and the frailty of man; *I have ſaid to corruption, thou art my father; to the worm, thou art my mother and my ſiſter.* Job, xvii. 14.

48 *Forma bonum fragile eſt.*—Ovid.

49 On *beauteous* charms no more, ye Fair! depend,
The grave does *all*, without diſtinction, blend;
All preſs *alike* to that ſame goal the *tomb*,
Where *wrinkled* Laura ſmiles at Chloe's *bloom*.

50 See Hervey's addreſs to *Florella*, in his Meditations among the Tombs, Vol. I. p. 48.

For

For this thy painful labours at thy glaſs[51],
T'improve thoſe charms and keep them in repair,
For which the ſpoiler thanks thee not[52]? Foul feeder!
Coarſe fare and carrion pleaſe thee full as well,
And leave as keen a reliſh on the ſenſe.
Look how the fair one weeps!—the conſcious tears
Stand thick as dew-drops on the bells of flowers:
Honeſt effuſion! the ſwoln heart in vain
Works hard, to put a gloſs on its diſtreſs.

STRENGTH, too—thou ſurly and leſs gentle boaſt
Of thoſe that loud laugh at the village ring,
A fit of common ſickneſs pulls thee down
With greater eaſe than e'er thou didſt the ſtripling
That raſhly dar'd thee to th' unequal fight.—
What groan was that I heard?—Deep groan indeed!
With anguiſh heavy laden.—Let me trace it.—
From yonder bed it comes, where the ſtrong man,
By ſtronger arm belabour'd, gaſps for breath
Like a hard-hunted beaſt. How his great heart
Beats thick! his roomy breaſt by far too ſcant
To give the lungs full play,—What now avail
The ſtrong-built, ſinewy limbs, and well-ſpread ſhoulders!
See how he tugs for life, and lays about him,
Mad with his pains!—Eager he catches hold

---

[51] Ye blooming virgins, beautiful and fair,
To yonder mould'ring place of ſculls repair,
And learn how frail the charms of beauty are.
Solitary Walks.

[52] Learn hence, ye lively and engaging Fair,
To make your *minds* your chief and greateſt care;
For death ere long will cloſe the brighteſt eyes,
But heav'n-born *Virtue* never, *never* dies.
Rural Chriſtian

Of what comes next to hand, and graſps it hard,
Juſt like a creature drowning; hideous ſight!
Oh! how his eyes ſtand out, and ſtare full ghaſtly!
Whilſt the diſtemper's rank and deadly venom
Shoots like a burning arrow croſs his bowels,
And drinks his marrow up.——Heard you that groan?
It was his laſt.—See how the great GOLIATH,
Juſt like a child that brawl'd itſelf to reſt,
Lies ſtill[53].——What mean'ſt thou then, O mighty Boaſter,
To vaunt of nerves of thine? What means the Bull,
Unconſcious of his ſtrength, to play the coward,
And flee before a feeble thing like man,
That, knowing well the ſlackneſs of his arm,
Truſts only in the well-invented knife?

WITH STUDY pale, and midnight vigils ſpent,
The ſtar-ſurveying SAGE cloſe to his eye
Applies the ſight-invigorating Tube[54],
And trav'lling through the boundleſs length of ſpace,
Marks well the courſes of the far-ſeen orbs
That roll with regular confuſion there,
In ecſtaſy of thought. But ah! proud Man!
Great heights are hazardous to the weak head;
Soon, very ſoon, thy firmeſt footing fails;
And down thou drop'ſt into that darkſome place,
Where NOR DEVICE NOR KNOWLEDGE ever came[55].

HERE the TONGUE-WARRIOR lies diſabled now,
Diſarm'd, diſhonour'd, like a wretch that's gagg'd,

---

53 Well does a late celebrated writer ſay reſpecting *death*,—So *ſtrong* is the tyrant's arm, that nothing can reſiſt its force; ſo *true* his aim, that nothing can elude the blow.

Hervey's Meditations among the Tombs.

54 The Teleſcope. 55 Eccleſ. ix. 10.

And

And cannot tell his ails to paſſers by.
Great men of language[56]!—Whence this mighty change;
This dumb deſpair, and drooping of the head?
Tho' ſtrong Perſuaſion hung upon thy lip,
And ſly inſinuation's ſofter arts
In ambuſh lay upon thy flowing tongue;
Alas! how chop-fall'n now? Thick miſt and ſilence
Reſt, like a weary cloud, upon thy breaſt
Unceaſing.—Ah! where is the lifted arm,
The ſtrength of action, and the force of words,
The well-turn'd period, and the well-tun'd voice,
With all the leſſer ornaments of phraſe?
Ah! fled for ever, as they ne'er had been;
Raz'd from the book of Fame; or, more provoking,
Perchance ſome hackney, hunger-bitten Scribbler,
Inſults thy memory, and blots thy tomb
With long flat narrative, or duller rhymes,
With heavy halting pace that drawl along;
Enough to rouſe a dead man into rage,
And warm with red reſentment the wan cheek[57].

HERE the great maſters of the HEALING-ART,
Theſe mighty mock defrauders of the TOMB,
Spite of their JULEPS and CATHOLICONS,
Reſign their fate.—Proud ÆSCULAPIUS' ſon[58]!
Where are thy boaſted implements of Art,
And all thy well-cram'd magazines of Health?

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56 Orators.

57 Too many epitaphs, both in proſe and verſe, are to be met with upon tomb ſtones, as illiterate and unmeaning as others are ridiculous and adulatory.

58 An apoſtrophe to deceaſed phyſicians, founded on that common maxim, *Phyſician, heal thyſelf.*

Nor

Nor hill, nor vale, as far as ſhips could go,
Nor margin of the gravel bottom'd brook,
Eſcap'd thy rifling hand:—from ſtubborn ſhrubs
Thou wrung'ſt their ſhy-retiring virtues out,
And vex'd them in the fire; nor fly, nor inſect,
Nor writhy ſnake, eſcap'd thy deep reſearch.
But why this APPARATUS? Why this coſt?
Tell us, thou doughty keeper from the GRAVE,
Where are thy RECIPES and CORDIALS now,
With the long liſt of vouchers for thy cures[59]?
Alas! thou ſpeak'ſt not.—The bold impoſtor
Looks not more ſilly when the cheat's found out.

HERE the lank MISER, worſt of felons,
Who meanly ſtole, (diſcreditable ſhift,)
From back and belly too, their proper cheer,
Eas'd of a taſk it irk'd the wretch to pay
To his own carcaſe, now lies cheaply lodged,
By clam'rous Appetites no longer teaz'd,
Nor tedious bills of charges and repairs.
But ah! where are his rents, his comings-in?
Ay! now you've made the rich man poor indeed[60]!
ROBB'D OF HIS GODS, what has he left behind?
Oh, curſed luſt of Gold! when for thy ſake,

---

59 In vain phyſicians ſtrive to ſave
Themſelves or patients from the grave;
In vain we court the doctor's art
To ward off Death's unerring dart:
For, as death came thro' Adam's fall,
So death muſt be the lot of all.—

Romans, v. 12.

60 Here terminate *Ambition*'s airy ſchemes,
The ſyren *Pleaſure* here allures no more;
Here grov'ling *Av'rice* drops her golden dreams,
And life's fantaſtic trifles all are o'er.

The

The fool throws up his int'reſt in *both* worlds:
Firſt ſtarv'd in this, then damn'd in that to come[61].

How ſhocking muſt thy ſummons be, O DEATH;
To him that is at eaſe in his poſſeſſions;
Who counting on long years of pleaſure here,
Is quite unfurniſh'd for that world to come[62]!
In that dread moment, how the frantic Soul
Raves round the walls of her clay tenement;
Runs to each avenue, and ſhrieks for help,
But ſhrieks in vain!—How wiſhfully ſhe looks
On all ſhe's leaving, now no longer her's!
A little longer, yet a *little* longer,
Oh! might ſhe ſtay to waſh away her ſtains,
And fit her for her paſſage.——Mournful ſight!
Her very eyes weep blood; and every groan
She heaves is big with horror.——But the Foe,
Like a ſtaunch murd'rer, ſteady to his purpoſe,
Purſues her cloſe through every lane of life,
Nor miſſes once the track, but preſſes on;
Till forc'd at laſt to the tremendous verge,
At once ſhe ſinks to everlaſting ruin[63].

SURE 'tis a ſerious thing to DIE! My ſoul!
What a ſtrange moment muſt it be, when near
Thy journey's end, thou haſt the gulf in view!
That awful gulf, no mortal e'er repaſs'd

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61 The ſacred ſcriptures declare, *the love of money is the root of all evil*, and that *covetouſneſs is idolatry*. 1. Tim. vi. 10. Coloſ. iii. 5.

62 Read the hiſtory of the rich man, ſpoken of in Luke xii. 16—20.

63 The above repreſentation of a departing ſoul is truly pathetic and ſublime, and deſervedly quoted by the late Rev. Mr. Hervey in his Meditations, page 59.

To tell what's doing on the other ſide.
Nature runs back, and ſhudders at the ſight[64],
And every life-ſtring bleeds at thought of parting;
For part they muſt; BODY and SOUL muſt part:
Fond couple! link'd more cloſe than wedded pair.
THIS wings its way to its Almighty Source,
The Witneſs of its actions, now its Judge[65];
THAT drops into the dark and noiſome GRAVE,
Like a diſabled pitcher of no uſe[66].

---

64 'Tis not the ſtoick's leſſon, got by rote,
The pomp of words and pedant diſſertation,
That can ſupport thee in that hour of terror:
Books have taught cowards to talk nobly of it:
But when the trial comes, they ſtart, and ſtand aghaſt.
Rowe's Fair Penitent.

65 Acts xvii. 31.

Dr. Watt's meditations on the diſſolution of the body are happily expreſſed in the following lines:

And muſt this body die?
This mortal frame decay?
And muſt theſe active limbs of mine
Lie mould'ring in the clay?
Corruption, earth, and worms,
Shall but refine this fleſh,
'Till my triumphant ſpirit comes,
To put it on afreſh.
God, my Redeemer, lives,
And often from the ſkies
Looks down, and watches all my duſt,
'Till he ſhall bid it riſe.—*Hymn* 110. *book* II.

66 How low and inferior is the author's ſimile reſpecting the lifeleſs body to that of St. Paul's, in I. Cor. xv. 42, 43.—*It is ſown in corruption, it is raiſed in incorruption; it is ſown a natural body, it is raiſed a ſpiritual body; it is ſown in weakneſs, it is raiſed in power; it is ſown in diſhonour, it is raiſed in glory.*

THE GRAVE.

PART THE SECOND.

As the tree falleth, there it ſhall lie;
As death leaves, judgment will find us.

THE ARGUMENT.

Annihilation *an abſurdity, encourages the blackeſt crimes;* Suicide, *and its dreadful conſequences; true bravery conſiſts in patiently waiting till our change comes; the ſtate of the dead a ſecret; deſcription of a ſexton, or grave-digger; his thoughtleſsneſs and inconſideration, a pitiable circumſtance; the folly of the living in not conſidering their latter end; the ſwiftneſs and ſecreſy of time; the world deſcribed; death the common lot of all; rich and poor of every age and nation alike ſubject to its ſtroke; the happineſs of Adam before his fall; the ſhortneſs of it; ſin the origin of every evil in the world; death repreſented as an inſatiable glutton; the grave deſcribed; the reſurrection of the dead; Chriſt's reſurrection, a pledge of ours; the folly of meeting death with reluctance; the end of a good man happily pourtrayed; concluſion.*

THE GRAVE.

All is ſteadfaſt and immoveable beyond the Grave; whether we are then ſeated on the throne, or ſtretched on the rack; a ſeal will be ſet to our condition, by the hand of everlaſting Mercy, or inflexible Juſtice.—*Hervey's Meditations.*

IF DEATH was nothing, and nought AFTER DEATH;
If when men died, at once they ceas'd to be,
Returning to the barren womb of Nothing,
Whence firſt they ſprung, then might the Debauchee
Untrembling mouth the Heaven's[67]:—Then might the Drunkard
Reel over his full bowl, and, when 'tis drain'd,
Fill up another to the brim, and laugh
At the poor bugbear DEATH:—Then might the wretch
That's weary of the world, and tir'd of life,
At once give each inquietude the ſlip,
By ſtealing out of being when he pleas'd,
And by what way, whether by hemp or ſteel.
DEATH'S THOUSAND DOORS ſtand open. Who could force
The ill-pleas'd gueſt to ſit out his full time,
Or blame him if he goes?---Sure he does well,

[67] See Dr. Young's ſoliloquy on the ſuppoſition of annihilation, in his Night Thoughts, Night 7, line 653.

That helps himſelf as timely as he can,
When able.—But if there is an HEREAFTER[68],
And that there is, Conſcience, uninfluenc'd,
And ſuffer'd to ſpeak out, tells ev'ry man,
Then muſt it be an awful thing to DIE:
More horrid yet to die by one's *own* hand.

SELF-MURDER!—name it not: our iſland's ſhame;
That makes her the reproach of neighbouring ſtates,
Shall Nature, ſwerving from her earlieſt dictate,
Self-preſervation, fall by her *own* act?
Forbid it, Heaven.—Let not, upon diſguſt,
The ſhameleſs hand be fully crimſon'd o'er
With blood of its own lord.—Dreadful attempt!
Juſt reeking from ſelf-ſlaughter, in a rage
To ruſh into the preſence of our Judge;
As if we challeng'd him to do his worſt,
And matter'd not his wrath[69]:—Unheard-of tortures
Muſt be reſerv'd for ſuch: theſe herd together;
The *common* damn'd ſhun their ſociety[70],
And look upon themſelves as Fiends leſs foul.
Our time is fix'd, and all our days are number'd[71];
How long, how ſhort, we know not:—this we know,
Duty requires we calmly wait the ſummons,

---

68 Addiſon very juſtly obſerves in his tragedy of Cato,

'Tis *Heav'n* itſelf points out an *hereafter*,
And intimates *Eternity* to *Man*.

69 Suicide is doubtleſs a crime of the *deepeſt* dye; for as we did not bring ourſelves *into* being, we have no right to hurry ourſelves *out* of it. He only who created us, has a juſt authority to deſtroy us, if he ſees fit. Vide *Herries's Addreſs on Suicide*.

70 The poet here, endeavouring to paint ſelf-murder in the blackeſt colours, indulges a falſe idea of wicked ſpirits in hell; as if ſome eſteem'd themſelves *better* than others, which the ſcriptures no where intimate, or lead us to ſuppoſe.

71 *Is there not an appointed time for men upon earth?*—Job, vii. 1. Eccleſ. iii 2.

Nor

Nor dare to ſtir till Heav'n ſhall give permiſſion[72]:
Like Sent'ries that muſt keep their deſtin'd ſtand,
And wait th' appointed hour, till they're reliev'd;
Thoſe only are the Brave that keep their ground,
And keep it to the laſt. To run away
Is but a coward's trick. To run away
From this world's ills, that, at the very worſt,
Will ſoon blow o'er, thinking to mend ourſelves,
By boldly vent'ring on a world unknown,
And plunging headlong in the dark;—'tis mad;
No phrenzy half ſo deſperate as this[73].

TELL us, ye dead; will none of you, in pity
To thoſe you left behind, diſcloſe the ſecret?
Oh! that ſome courteous ghoſt would blab it out;
What 'tis you are, and we muſt ſhortly be[74].
I've heard, that ſouls departed, have ſometimes
Forewarn'd men of their death:—'Twas kindly done,
To knock, and give th' alarm.—But what means
This ſtinted charity?—'Tis but lame kindneſs
That does its work by halves.—Why might you not
Tell us what 'tis TO DIE?—Do the ſtrict laws
Of your ſociety forbid your ſpeaking
Upon a point ſo nice?—I'll aſk no more:
Sullen, like lamps in ſepulchres, your ſhine
Enlightens but yourſelves. Well—'tis no matter;

---

72 Job, xiv. 14.

73 Suicides are often, and not improperly, brought in by juries, *non compos mentis.*

74 * * * * * No notice they give,
Nor tell us where, nor how they live;
As if bound up by ſolemn fate,
To keep this ſecret of their ſtate;
To tell their joys nor pains to none,
That man might live by *faith* alone.

A very little time will clear up all,
And make us learn'd as you are and as cloſe.

DEATH's ſhafts fly thick: here falls the Village ſwain,
And there his pamper'd Lord. The cup goes round:
And who ſo artful as to put it by[75]!
'Tis long ſince DEATH had the majority;
Yet ſtrange! THE LIVING LAY IT NOT TO HEART[76].
See yonder maker of the dead man's bed,
The SEXTON, hoary-headed chronicle,
Of hard, unmeaning face, down which ne'er ſtole
A gentle tear, with mattock in his hand,
Digs thro' whole rows of kindred and acquaintance,
By far his juniors.—Scarce a ſcull's caſt up,
But well he knew its Owner, and can tell
Some paſſage of his life[77].—Thus hand in hand
The ſot has walk'd with DEATH twice twenty years,
And yet ne'er Yonker on the green laughs louder
Or clubs a ſmuttier tale[78]:—When Drunkards meet,
None ſings a merrier catch, or lends a hand
More willing to his cup.—Poor wretch! he minds not,
That ſoon ſome truſty brother of the trade
Shall do for him, what he has done for thouſands[79],

ON

75 Death's fatal ſtroke no mortal can withſtand,
None can elude or ſtay the tyrant's hand.—*Rural Chriſtian.*

76 Iſa. lvii. 1.

77 The author here ſeems to have in view the grave-digger in the tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark.

78 To have mortality ever before our eyes without thinking of it, is ſurely the worſt ſtupidity a rational being can diſcover. Dr. Young ſeems well aſſur'd of this truth when he thus expreſſes himſelf,

Ah me! too long I ſet at nought the ſwarm
Of friendly warning, which around me flew;
And ſmil'd unſmitten.—ſmall my cauſe to ſmile.
Night Thoughts.

79 'Tis a common and melancholy obſervation, and too frequently confirmed, that none ſeem leſs affected with the thoughts of death, than thoſe

ON this ſide, and on that, men ſee their friends
Drop off, like leaves in autumn [80]; yet launch out
Into fantaſtic ſchemes, which the long Livers
In the world's hale and undegenerate days
Could ſcarce have leiſure for.——Fools that we are,
Never to think of DEATH and of OURSELVES
At the ſame time: as if to learn TO DIE
Were no concern of ours [81].—Oh! more than ſottiſh,
For creatures of a day in gameſome mood,
To frolic on Eternity's dread brink
Unapprehenſive; when, for aught we know,
The very firſt ſwoln ſurge ſhall ſweep us in [82].
Think we, or think we not, TIME hurries on
With a reſiſtleſs, unremitting ſtream;
Yet treads more ſoft than e'er did midnight thief,
That ſlides his hand under the miſer's pillow,
And carries of his prize [83].——What is THIS WORLD?
What, but a ſpacious BURIAL-FIELD unwall'd,
Strew'd with Death's ſpoils, the ſpoils of animals
Savage and tame, and full of dead men's bones.
The very turf on which we tread once liv'd [84];
And we that live muſt lend our carcaſes

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thoſe who have mortality moſt frequently preſented to their view, ſuch as, *Phyſicians Undertakers*, &c.

[80] The longer we live, the more reaſon we ſhall have to acknowledge and lament this melancholy truth.

[81] Well might Dr. Young in his Night Thoughts ſay,

All men think *all* men *mortal* but *themſelves*.
Learn to *live well*, that thou mayſt *die* ſo too,
To *live* and *die* is all we have to do.—*Denham.*

[82] Man is like a tenant at will, liable to be (and often is) turned out of his earthly tenement, the body, at a moment's warning; therefore he ſhould make it his daily ſtudy to be always ready for the awful ſummons, agreeable to the admonitions of divine revelation, Mark, xiii. 35, 36, Matthew, xxiv. 44.

[83] Matt. xxv. 13. 2 Pet. iii. 10.

[84] Whole buried towns ſupport the dancer's heel.

Night Thoughts.

The

To cover our own offspring; in their turns,
They, too, muſt cover theirs.—'Tis HERE all meet;
The ſhiv'ring ICELANDER, and ſun-burnt MOOR;
Men of all climes, that never met before;
And of all creeds, the JEW, the TURK, the CHRISTIAN.
HERE the proud PRINCE, and FAVOURITE yet prouder,
His Sov'reign's keeper, and the people's ſcourge,
Are huddled out of ſight[85].—HERE lie abaſh'd
The great NEGOTIATORS of the earth,
And celebrated MASTERS OF THE BALANCE,
Deep read in ſtratagems and wiles of courts[86];
Now vain their TREATY-SKILL.—Death ſcorns to treat.
HERE the o'erloaded SLAVE flings down his burthen
From his gall'd ſhoulders;—and when the cruel Tyrant,
With all his guards and tools of power about him,
Is meditating new unheard-of hardſhips,
Mocks his ſhort arm;—and quick as thought eſcapes
Where Tyrants vex not, and the weary reſt[87].

HERE the warm LOVER, leaving the cool ſhade,
The tell-tale Echo, and the babbling ſtream,
(Time out of mind the fav'rite ſeats of Love,)
Faſt by his gentle miſtreſs lays him down,
Unblaſted by foul tongue.—HERE friends and foes
Lie cloſe, unmindful of their former feuds[88].

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85 Mors equo pulſat pede pauperum tabernas
Regumque turres.————————*Hor.*

86 The winding ſheet and the coffin are the utmoſt bound of all earthly devices; hitherto they may go, but no farther.—*Hervey's Meditations.*

87 Job, iii. 17.

88 No cares nor paſſions here the boſom rend;
Here waſting pains and earthly troubles ceaſe;
Here hopeleſs love and cruel hatred end,
And the world-weary trav'ller reſts in peace.
Solitary Walks.

The lawn-rob'd PRELATE and plain PRESBYTER,
Ere-while that ſtood aloof, as ſhy to meet,
Familiar mingle HERE, like ſiſter ſtreams
That ſome rude interpoſing rock had ſplit.

HERE is the large-limb'd PEASANT:— HERE the CHILD
Of a ſpan long that never ſaw the ſun,
Nor preſs'd the nipple, ſtrangled in Life's porch.
HERE is the MOTHER, with her ſons and daughters;
The barren WIFE, and long-demurring MAID,
Whoſe lonely unappropriated ſweets
Smil'd like yon knot of cowſlips on the cliff,
Not to be come at by the willing hand.
HERE are the PRUDE ſevere, and gay COQUET,
The ſober WIDOW, and the young green VIRGIN,
Cropp'd like a roſe before 'tis fully blown,
Or half its worth diſclos'd. Strange medley HERE!

HERE garrulous OLD AGE winds up his tale;
And jovial YOUTH of lightſome vacant heart [89],
Whoſe every day was made of melody,
Hears not the voice of mirth [90].——The ſhrill-tongu'd SHREW,
Meek as the turtle-dove, forgets her chiding.
HERE are the wiſe, the generous, and the brave;
The juſt, the good, the worthleſs, the profane,
The downright clown, and perfectly well bred;
The fool, the churl, the ſcoundrel, and the mean,
The ſupple ſtateſman, and the patriot ſtern;

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89 Miſta ſenum ac Juvenum denſantur funera.—*Hor.*

90 Here youth and age in ſilence meet,
And death's pale vict'ry is complete.

The wrecks of Nations, and the ſpoils of Time,
With all the lumber of ſix thouſand years.

POOR MAN!—how happy once in thy FIRST STATE!
When yet but warm from thy great Maker's hand,
He ſtamp'd thee with his image, and, well-pleas'd,
Smil'd on his laſt fair work [91].—Then all was well.
Sound was the BODY, and the SOUL ſerene;
Like two ſweet inſtruments, ne'er out of tune,
That play their ſeveral parts.—Nor head, nor heart,
Offer'd to ache; nor was there cauſe they ſhould;
For all was pure within: no fell remorſe,
Nor anxious caſtings-up of what might be,
Alarm'd his peaceful boſom.—Summer ſeas
Shew not more ſmooth, when kiſs'd by ſouthern winds,
Juſt ready to expire.—Scarce importun'd,
The generous ſoil, with a luxurious hand,
Offer'd the various produce of the year,
And ev'ry thing moſt perfect in its kind [92].
Bleſſed! thrice bleſſed days!—But, ah! how ſhort!
Bleſs'd as the pleaſing dreams of Holy Men;
But fugitive like thoſe, and quickly gone.

OH! ſlipp'ry ſtate of things!—What ſudden turns!
What ſtrange viciſſitudes in the firſt leaf
Of man's ſad hiſtory!—To-day moſt happy,
And ere to-morrow's ſun has ſet, moſt abject [93].
How ſcant the ſpace between theſe vaſt extremes!

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[91] Gen. i. 27.

[92] Gen. ii. 9.

[93] *To-day* he's honour'd, and in vaſt eſteem,
To-morrow not a *beggar* values him;
To-day he's grand, majeſtic, all delight.
Ghaſtly and pale before *to-morrow* night.

Thus

Thus far'd it with OUR SIRE:—Not long h' enjoy'd
His paradiſe—Scarce had the happy tenant
Of the fair ſpot due time to prove its ſweets,
Or ſum them up, when ſtrait he muſt be gone [94],
Ne'er to return again.—And muſt he go?
Can nought compound for the *firſt* dire offence
Of erring man?—Like one that is condemn'd,
Fain would he trifle time with idle talk [95],
And parley with his fate.——But 'tis in vain—
Not all the laviſh odours of the place
Offer'd in incenſe can procure his pardon,
Or mitigate his doom.—A mighty Angel
With flaming ſword forbids his longer ſtay,
And drives the loiterer forth; nor muſt he take
One laſt and farewel round.—At once he loſt
His glory and his God.—If mortal now,
And ſorely maim'd, no wonder.—MAN HAS SINN'D.
Sick of his bliſs, and bent on new adventures,
EVIL he needs would try: nor try'd in vain.
(Dreadful experiment! deſtructive meaſure!
Where the worſt thing could happen, is ſucceſs.)
Alas! too well he ſped: the GOOD he ſcorn'd
Stalk'd off reluctant like an ill-us'd ghoſt,
Not to return;—or if it did, its viſits,
Like thoſe of ANGELS, ſhort and far between:
Whilſt the black DÆMON, with his hell-ſcap'd train,
Admitted once into its better room,
Grew loud and mutinous, nor would be gone;
Lording it o'er the MAN: who now too late
Saw the raſh error, which he could not mend [96]:
An error fatal not to him alone,

94 Gen. iii. 24.
95 See Milton's Paradiſe loſt; book x. line 845.
96 Gen. iii. 23.

But to his future ſons, his fortune's heirs [97].
Inglorious bondage!—Human nature groans
Beneath a vaſſalage ſo vile and cruel,
And its vaſt body bleeds thro' every vein.

WHAT havoc haſt thou made, foul monſter, SIN!
Greateſt and firſt of Ills.—The fruitful parent
Of woes of all dimenſions!—But for THEE
Sorrow had never been [98].—All-noxious Thing,
Of vileſt nature!—Other ſorts of Evils
Are kindly circumſcrib'd, and have their bounds.
The fierce VOLCANO, from his burning entrails,
That belches molten Stone, and globes of Fire,
Involv'd in pitchy clouds of ſmoke and ſtench,
Mars the adjacent fields for ſome leagues round,
And there it ſtops [99].—The big-ſwoln INUNDATION,
Of miſchief more diffuſive, raving loud,
Buries whole tracts of country, threat'ning more;
But that, too, has its ſhore it cannot paſs [100].
More dreadful far than theſe, SIN has laid waſte,
Not here and there a country, but a WORLD [101]:
Diſpatching at a wide-extended blow
Entire mankind; and for their ſakes defacing
A whole Creation's beauty with rude hands [102];

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97 Rom. v. 18.

98 Milton thus deſcribes the effects of Adam's ſin in his inimitable poem, entitled Paradiſe Loſt:

. . . . . the fruit
Of that forbidden tree, whoſe mortal taſte
Brought death into the world, and all our woe.

99 Mount Ætna.

100 Thus ſaith the Almighty to the reſtleſs ocean, *Hitherto ſhalt thou come, but no farther; and here ſhall thy proud waves be ſtayed.*—Job, xxxviii. 11.

101 Rom. v. 12.

102 Rom. viii. 22.

Blaſting

Blaſting the foodful grain, the loaded branches,
And marking all along its way with ruin [103].
Accurſed Thing!—Oh! where ſhall Fancy find
A proper name to call Thee by, expreſſive
Of all thy horrors? Pregnant womb of Ills!
Of temper ſo tranſcendently malign,
That toads and ſerpents of moſt deadly kind,
Compar'd to thee, are harmleſs.—Sickneſſes
Of every ſize and ſymptom, racking pains,
And blueſt plagues are thine.—See how the Fiend
Profuſely ſcatters the contagion round!
Whilſt deep-mouth'd Slaughter, bellowing at her heels,
Wades deep in blood new ſpilt; yet for to-morrow
Shapes out new work of great uncommon daring,
And inly pines 'till the dread blow is ſtruck [104].

BUT hold:—I've gone too far; too much diſcover'd
My Father's nakedneſs, and Nature's ſhame.—
Here let me pauſe, and drop an honeſt tear,
One burſt of filial duty and condolence,
O'er all thoſe ample deſerts DEATH hath ſpread;
This CHAOS of mankind.——O great MAN-EATER!
Whoſe ev'ry day is CARNIVAL, not fated yet!
Unheard-of EPICURE! without a fellow!
The verieſt GLUTTONS do not *always* cram;
Some intervals of abſtinence are ſought
To edge the appetite: THOU ſeekeſt none [105].

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103 Gen. iii. 17. 18.

104 Milton ſpeaking of the entrance of *ſin* and *death* into paradiſe, upon our firſt parents eating the forbidden fruit, ſays,

. . . . . they both betook them ſeveral ways,
Both to deſtroy, or unimmortal make
All kinds, and for deſtruction to mature,
Sooner or later.—*Paradiſe Loſt*, *book* x.

105 Death's a devourer of *quotidian* prey.—*Night Thoughts.*

Methinks

Methinks the countleſs ſwarms thou haſt devour'd,
And thouſands that each hour thou gobbleſt up,
THIS, leſs than THIS, might gorge thee to the full;
But, ah! rapacious ſtill, thou gap'ſt for more:
Like one, whoſe days defrauded of his meals,
On whom lank Hunger lays her ſkinny hand,
And whets to keeneſt eagerneſs his cravings;
As if diſeaſes, maſſacres, and poiſon,
Famine, and war, were not thy Caterers.

BUT know, that thou MUST RENDER UP THE DEAD,
And with high int'reſt too.—They are not thine;
But only in thy keeping for a ſeaſon,
Till the great promis'd day of Reſtitution [106];
When loud diffuſive ſound of brazen trump
Of ſtrong-lung'd Cherub, ſhall alarm thy Captives [107],
And rouſe the long, long ſleepers into life,
Day-light and liberty [108].——
THEN muſt thy gates fly open, and reveal
The mines that lay long forming under ground,
In their dark cells immur'd; but now full ripe,
And pure as ſilver from the crucible,
That twice has ſtood the torture of the fire
And inquiſition of the forge.—We know
Th' illuſtrious Deliverer of mankind,
THE SON OF GOD, thee foil'd.—Him in thy pow'r
Thou couldſt not hold:—ſelf-vigorous he roſe,
And ſhaking off thy fetters, ſoon retook
Thoſe ſpoils his voluntary yielding lent [109]:
(Sure pledge of our releaſement from thy thrall!)

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[106] Mors janua vitæ.—*Virg.*
[107] Matt. xxiv. 31. Theſſ. iv. 16.
[108] I. Cor. xv. 52.
[109] Heb. ii. 14, 15.

Twice

Twice twenty days he ſojourn'd here on earth,
And ſhew'd himſelf alive to CHOSEN WITNESSES,
By proofs ſo ſtrong, that the moſt ſlow aſſenting
Had not a ſcruple left [110].—This having done,
He mounted up to heav'n.—Methinks I ſee him
Climb the aerial height, and glide along
Athwart the ſev'ring clouds: but the faint eye,
Flung backward in the chace, ſoon drops its hold,
Diſabled quite, and jaded with purſuing.
Heav'n's portals wide expand to let him in;
Nor are his *friends* ſhut out: as ſome great Prince
Not for himſelf alone procures admiſſion,
But for his train.——It was his Royal will,
That where he is, there ſhould his *followers* be [111].
DEATH only lies between.—A gloomy path!
Made yet more gloomy by our coward fears [112]:
But not untrod nor tedious; the fatigue
Will ſoon go off: beſides, there's no *by*-road
To bliſs [113].—Then why, like ill-condition'd children,
Start we at tranſient hardſhips in the way
That leads to purer air, and ſofter ſkies,
And a ne'er ſetting ſun?—Fools that we are!
We wiſh to be where ſweets unwith'ring bloom;

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110 Luke, xxiv. 39. John xx. 27, 28.

111 John, xvii. 24.

112 Death and his *image* riſing in the *brain*,
Bear *faint* reſemblance, never are *alike*;
Fear ſhakes the pencil, *fancy* loves exceſs,
Dark *ignorance* is laviſh of her ſhades,
And *theſe* the formidable picture draw.—*Night Thoughts.*

113 Dr. Young very beautifully expreſſes the real Chriſtian's ſentiments reſpecting the laſt enemy of Nature, or rather happily deſcribes what death is to every true believer in Chriſt, in the following words:

Death is the portal to eternal life,
This king of terrors is the prince of peace.

Night Thoughts.

But

But ſtrait our wiſh revoke, and will not go.
So have I ſeen, upon a ſummer's ev'n,
Faſt by a riv'let's brink a youngſter play:
How wiſhfully he looks to ſtem the tide!
This moment reſolute, next unreſolv'd:
At laſt he dips his foot; but as he dips,
His fears redouble, and he runs away
From th' inoffenſive ſtream, unmindful now
Of all the flow'rs that paint the farther bank,
And ſmil'd ſo ſweet of late.—Thrice welcome DEATH!
That after many a painful bleeding ſtep
Conducts us to our home, and lands us ſafe
On the long-wiſh'd-for ſhore [114].—Prodigious change!
Our bane turn'd to a bleſſing!—DEATH, diſarm'd,
Loſes his fellneſs quite [115].—All thanks to Him
Who ſcourg'd the venom out [116].—Sure THE LAST END
Of the good man is PEACE [117]!—How calm his EXIT!
Night-dews fall not more gently to the ground,
Nor weary worn-out winds expire ſo ſoft.
Behold him in the evening tide of life,
A life well ſpent, whoſe early care it was
His riper years ſhould not upbraid his green:
By unperceiv'd degrees he wears away;
Yet, like the ſun, ſeems larger at his ſetting:
(High in his faith and hopes) look how he reaches
After the prize in view! and, like a bird
That's hamper'd, ſtruggles hard to get away:

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114 . . . . Life's a debtor to the grave;
Dark lattice! letting in eternal day.—*Night Thoughts.*

115 Well may a dying Chriſtian join with an inſpired apoſtle in crying out, *O Death! where is thy ſting? O Grave! where is thy victory?*—I. Cor. xv. 55.

116 I. Cor. xv. 57.

117 Iſa. lvii. 2.

Whilſt

Whilſt the glad gates of ſight are wide expanded
To let new glories in, the firſt fair fruits
Of the vaſt-coming harveſt.—THEN! Oh, THEN!
Each earth-born joy grows vile, or diſappears,
Shrunk to a thing of nought.—Oh! how he longs
To have his paſsport ſign'd, and be diſmiſs'd [118]!
'Tis done! and now he's happy!—The glad SOUL
Has not a wiſh uncrown'd.—Ev'n the lag FLESH
RESTS too IN HOPE of meeting once again
Its better half, never to ſunder more [119];
Nor ſhall it hope in vain [120];—The time draws on
When not a ſingle ſpot of burial earth,
Whether on land, or in the ſpacious ſea,
But muſt give back its long-committed duſt
Inviolate [121]:—and faithfully ſhall theſe
Make up the full account; not the leaſt atom
Embezzl'd, or miſlaid, of the whole tale.
Each SOUL ſhall have a BODY ready furniſh'd;
And each ſhall have his own.—Hence ye profane!
Aſk not, how this can be?—Sure the ſame Pow'r
That rear'd the piece at firſt, and took it down,
Can re-aſſemble the looſe ſcatter'd parts,
And put them as they were [122].—Almighty God
Has done much more; nor is his arm impair'd
Through length of days: and what he can, he *will:*
His Faithfulneſs ſtands bound to ſee it done [123].

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[118] II. Cor. v. 4.

[119] Pſalms, xvi. 19.

[120] I. Cor. xv. 52.

[121] Rev. xx. 13.

[122] What the Almighty has declared in his word ſhall come to paſs, however human reaſon may not be able to inveſtigate the manner how, or the means by which it ſhall be effected. Pope very juſtly obſerves, "Man was not made to queſtion but *adore.*"—*Eſſay on Man.*

[123] Matt. xxiv. 31. John vi. 39, 40.

When the dread trumpet ſounds, the ſlumb'ring duſt,
(Not unattentive to the call) ſhall wake [124]:
And ev'ry joint poſſeſs its proper place,
With a new elegance of form, unknown
To its *firſt* ſtate [125].—Nor ſhall the conſcious SOUL
Miſtake its partner, but amidſt the crowd,
Singling its other half, into its arms
Shall ruſh with all th' impatience of a man
That's new come home, who, having long been abſent,
With haſte runs over ev'ry different room,
In pain to ſee the whole. Thrice-happy meeting!
Nor TIME, nor DEATH, ſhall ever part them more [126].
'Tis but a night, a long and moonleſs night;
We make the GRAVE our bed [127], and then are gone [128].

THUS at the ſhut of ev'n, the weary Bird
Leaves the wide air, and in ſome lonely brake
Cow'rs down, and dozes till the dawn of day,
Then claps his well-fledg'd wings, and bears away.

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[124] . . . . . Death is the crown of life;
Were death denied, poor man would live in vain;
Death wounds to cure; we fall; we riſe; we reign.
Night Thoughts.

[125] Philip. iii. 21.

[126] I. Theſ. iv. 17.

[127] Iſa. lvii. 2.

[128] Man, thoughtleſs man! whoſe moments quickly fly,
Wakes but to *ſleep* again, and lives to *die*;
And when this *preſent* fleeting life is o'er,
Man dies to *live* and *lives* to die no *more*.
Solitary Walks.

Happy, thrice happy they, who meet death only as a *ſleep*, out of which they have good ground to hope they ſhall awake to life *eternal*. I. Theſſ. iv. 14.

Thus ſings the late pious Dr. Watts, in his 117th pſalm:

My fleſh ſhall ſlumber in the ground,
Till the laſt trumpet's joyful ſound,
Then burſt the chains with ſweet ſurprize,
And in my ſaviour's image riſe.

An

AN

ELEGY

WRITTEN IN A

COUNTRY CHURCH-YARD.

By Mr. GRAY.

THE ARGUMENT.

A ſummer's evening deſcribed; its calmneſs diſturbed by the beetle, ſheepbells, and owl; country church-yard pourtrayed, with its ſleeping tenants; the vanity of ambition, power and beauty; the folly of pompous epitaphs and inſcriptions; true merit obſcured by penury; ruſtic poverty not to be deſpiſed; love of life natural to all; what the poet's fate may be in ſome future period, related by old age, with his epitaph.

AN

ELEGY.

The TIME,—*A Summer's Evening.*

I.

THE curfew [129] tolls the knell of parting day;
The lowing herd wind ſlowly o'er the lea;
The plowman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkneſs and to me.

II.

Now fades the glimmering landſcape on the ſight,
And all the air a ſolemn ſtillneſs holds,
Save where the beetle wheels his drony flight,
And drowſy tinklings lull the diſtant folds [130];

III.

Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tow'r,
The moping owl does to the moon complain
Of ſuch as, wand'ring near her ſacred bow'r,
Moleſt her ancient ſolitary reign.

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[129] A bell which uſed to be rung every evening by order of William the Conqueror, as a ſignal for all perſons to rake out their fires, and put out their lights.

[130] Every reader, who is an attentive obſerver of *rural* nature muſt confeſs, while he cannot but admire, the beauty and natural colouring of this elegant deſcription of a ſummer's eve.

IV.

Beneath thoſe rugged elms, that yew-tree's ſhade,
Where heaves the turf in many a mould'ring heap,
Each in his narrow cell *for ever* laid [131],
The rude forefathers of the hamlet ſleep [132].

V.

The breezy call of incenſe-breathing morn,
The ſwallow twitt'ring from the ſtraw-built ſhed,
The cock's ſhrill clarion, or the echoing horn,
No more ſhall rouſe them from their lowly bed [133].

VI.

For them no more the blazing hearth ſhall burn,
Or buſy houſewife ply her evening care;
No children run to liſp their Sire's return,
Or climb his knees the envied kiſs to ſhare [134].

VII.

Oft did the harveſt to their ſickle yield,
Their furrow oft the ſtubborn glebe has broke;
How jocund did they drive their team afield!
How bow'd the woods beneath their ſturdy ſtroke!

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[131] The term *for ever* laid, as it tends to miſlead weak minds, to queſtion the doctrine of the reſurrection of the dead, ſhould be altered to *forgotten* laid.

[132] The following ſtanza was inſerted in the firſt edition of this poem, but afterwards excluded:

Hark! how the ſacred calm that breathes around,
Bids every fierce tumultuous paſſion ceaſe;
In ſtill, ſmall accents whiſp'ring from the ground,
A grateful earneſt of eternal peace.

[133] *Requieſcant in pace.*

[134] This picture of domeſtic happineſs, or nuptial felicity, in rural life, is natural, intereſting, and pathetic.—See *Thomſon's Winter*, line 310. for a ſimiliar deſcription.

VIII. Let

VIII.

Let not Ambition mock their uſeful toil,
Their homely joys and deſtiny obſcure;
Nor grandeur hear with a diſdainful ſmile
The ſhort and ſimple annals of the poor [135].

IX.

The boaſt of heraldry, the pomp of pow'r,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Await alike th' inevitable hour:
The paths of glory lead but to the grave [136].

X.

Nor you, ye Proud, impute to theſe the fault,
If Mem'ry o'er their tomb no trophies raiſe,
Where thro' the long-drawn aiſle and fretted vault
The pealing anthem ſwells the note of praiſe.

XI.

Can ſtoried urn or animated buſt
Back to its manſion call the fleeting breath?
Can Honour's voice provoke the ſilent duſt,
Or Flatt'ry ſooth the dull, cold ear of Death [137]?

XII.

Perhaps in this neglected ſpot is laid
Some heart once pregnant with celeſtial fire;
Hands, that the rod of empire might have ſway'd,
Or wak'd to extaſy the living lyre [138].

XIII. But

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[135] The rich and great have no more reaſon to deſpiſe the poor and abject, than the latter have to envy the *former*, as both ſtand equally in need of the aſſiſtance of each other; in this reſpect, the *labour* of the one, and the *wages* of the other, may be ſuitably contraſted.

[136] Earth's higheſt ſtation ends in, Here he lies,
And duſt to duſt concludes her nobleſt ſong.—*Night Thoughts.*

[137] The mockery of tombſtone panegyric or venal epitaphs, on the merits of deceaſed nobility, is here juſtly expoſed.

[138] Many a poor man has poſſeſſed ſuch a genius and abilities as

XIII.

But Knowledge to their eyes her ample page,
Rich with the ſpoils of Time, did ne'er unroll:
Chill Penury repreſs'd their noble rage,
And froze the genial current of the ſoul[139].

XIV.

Full many a gem of pureſt ray ſerene,
The dark unfathom'd caves of ocean bear;
Full many a flower is born to bluſh unſeen,
And waſte its ſweetneſs on the deſert air[140].

XV.

Some village Hampden, that with dauntleſs breaſt
The little tyrant of his fields withſtood;
Some mute inglorious Milton here may reſt.
Some Cromwell guiltleſs of his country's blood[141].

XVI.

Th' applauſe of liſt'ning ſenates to command,
The threats of pain and ruin to deſpiſe,
To ſcatter plenty o'er a ſmiling land,
And read their hiſt'ry in a nation's eyes,

---

as would have enobled the brighteſt characters, and adorned the moſt elevated ſtations; but indigence has obſcured his talents and confined him within the narrow circle of a country village; yet ſtill he might be a worthy and uſeful member of ſociety, though a ſtranger to nobility and influence.

139 Poverty may ſuppreſs the *ſentiments*, but cannot alter the *feelings* or *diſpoſition* of a truly noble, generous and aſpiring mind.

140 The following lines, taken from an edition of Gray's Poems publiſhed in Dublin, are no indifferent parody on the above ſtanza;

Full many a lark, high tow'ring to the ſky,
Unheard, unheeded, greets th' approach of light;
Full many a ſtar, unſeen by mortal eye,
With twinkling luſtre glimmers thro' the night.

141 See a Criticiſm on This Elegy, publiſhed by Cadell.

XVII. Their

XVII.

Their lot forbade; nor circumſcrib'd alone
Their growing virtues, but their *crimes* confin'd;
Forbade to wade thro' ſlaughter to a throne,
And ſhut the gates of Mercy on mankind [142];

XVIII.

The ſtruggling pangs of conſcious truth to hide,
To quench the bluſhes of ingenuous ſhame,
Or heap the ſhrine of Luxury and Pride
With incenſe kindled at the Muſe's flame.

XIX.

Far from the madding crowd's ignoble ſtrife,
Their ſober wiſhes never learn'd to ſtray;
Along the cool ſequeſter'd vale of life
They keep the noiſeleſs tenor of their way [143].

XX.

Yet e'en theſe bones from inſult to protect,
Some frail memorial ſtill erected nigh,
With uncouth rhymes and ſhapeleſs ſculpture deck'd,
Implores the paſſing tribute of a ſigh.

XXI.

Their name, their years, ſpelt by th' unletter'd Muſe,
The place of fame and elegy ſupply:
And many a holy text around ſhe ſtrews,
That teach the ruſtic moraliſt to die [144].

XXII. For

---

[142] The more exalted the ſtation, the greater are the opportunities of doing good or evil among mankind at large.

[143] The wiſdom of Providence is conſpicuous in ſuiting the mind to the ſtation, and giving content where he does not ſee fit to beſtow wealth.

[144] The following common, and no improper epitaph, however

XXII.

For who to dumb forgetfulneſs a prey
This pleaſing anxious being e'er reſign'd,
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
Nor caſt one longing ling'ring look behind [145]?

XXIII.

On ſome fond breaſt the parting ſoul relies,
Some pious drops the cloſing eye requires;
Ev'n from the tomb the voice of Nature cries,
Ev'n in our aſhes live their wonted fires [146].

XXIV.

For thee, who, mindful of th' unhonour'd Dead,
Doſt in theſe lines their artleſs tale relate;
If chance, by lonely Contemplation led,
Some kindred Spirit ſhall inquire *thy* fate;

XXV.

Haply ſome hoary-headed Swain may ſay,
'Oft have we ſeen him at the peep of da w
'Bruſhing with haſty ſteps the dews away,
'To meet the ſun upon the upland lawn.

---

plain it may be accounted, is frequently to be met with in country church-yards:

As I am now, ſo you muſt be.
Prepare in time to follow me.

N. B. A ſuitable admonition to every reader, whether young or old, rich or poor.

145 However this may be applicable to mankind in general in the views of death, it ſeems inconſiſtent with the apoſtle's language in Philip. i. 28. *Having a* deſire *to depart.*

146 The two laſt lines of this ſtanza are ſomewhat ambiguous; neither the truths of revelation, nor the dictates of right reaſon, ſupport the ſentiments, or countenance the extravagant ideas they hold out. Well may they be ſaid by the Author of the Criticiſm on this Elegy, to contain a poſition at which *Experience* revolts, *Credulity* heſitates, and even *Fancy* ſtares.

XXVI. 'There

XXVI.

'There at the foot of yonder nodding beech,
'That wreathes its old fantaſtic roots ſo high,
'His liſtleſs length at noon-tide would he ſtretch,
'And pore upon the brook that babbles by[147].

XXVII.

'Hard by yon wood, now ſmiling as in ſcorn,
'Mutt'ring his wayward fancies he would rove;
'Now drooping, woeful, wan, like one forlorn,
'Or craz'd with care, or croſs'd in hopeleſs love.

XXVIII.

'One morn I miſs'd him on the cuſtom'd hill,
'Along the heath, and near his fav'rite tree;
'Another came; nor yet beſide the rill,
'Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood was he.

XXIX.

'The next, with dirges due, in ſad array,
'Slow thro' the church-way path we ſaw him borne.
'Approach, and read (for thou canſt read) the lay
'Grav'd on the ſtone beneath yon aged thorn[148].

---

147 The following ſtanza appeared in the firſt edition of this poem, but have been ſince omitted.

Him have we ſeen the green wood ſide along,
While o'er the heath we paſt, our labour done;
Oft as the wood-lark pip'd her farewel ſong,
With wiſtful eyes purſue the ſetting ſun.

148 The following lines were inſerted here in the early editions of this work:

There ſcatter'd oft, the earlieſt of the year,
By hands unſeen are ſhow'rs of vi'lets found;
The redbreaſt loves to build and warble there,
And little footſteps lightly trip the ground.

The EPITAPH.

I.

HERE reſts his head upon the lap of Earth,
A youth to Fortune and to Fame unknown;
Fair Science frown'd not on his humble birth,
And Melancholy mark'd him for her own.

II.

Large was his bounty, and his ſoul ſincere,
Heav'n did a recompence as largely ſend:
He gave to mis'ry all he had, a tear,
He gain'd from Heav'n ('twas all he wiſh'd) a *friend*[149].

III.

No farther ſeek his merits to diſcloſe,
Nor draw his frailties from their dread abode[150],
(There they alike in trembling hope repoſe)
The boſom of his Father and his God[151].

---

[149] The poet here ſeems to have in view Dr. Young's Eſtimate of a real friend:

Poor is the *friendleſs* maſter of a *world*,
A *world* in purchaſe for a *friend* is gain.—*Night Thoughts.*

[150] *De mortuis nil niſi bonum.*

[151] The idea of the boſom of his God being the abode of his merits and frailties, evidently refers either to the book of remembrance ſpoken of in Malachi, iii. 16. or the wiſe man's awful declaration in the xiith of Eccleſiaſtes and 14th verſe: *For God ſhall bring every work into judgment, with every ſecret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.*

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OR THE

ART OF SAYING *MUCH* IN A *FEW* WORDS,

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By G. WRIGHT, Eſq.